

# NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE

Management Policy # 85

Page 1 of 3

Issued: March 1997

Revised: July 2002, May 2004, August 2011

Issued by: Controller's Office

Public Drawer: J:\Policies\Contrlr\Telephone Credit Cards & Cell Phones

## USE OF LONG-DISTANCE NETWORK, STATE ISSUED TELEPHONE CREDIT CARDS, AND CELL PHONES

### Purpose and Scope

To establish a policy on the use of the state's long-distance network, state issued telephone calling cards and cell phones.

### **Long-Distance Calls, Credit Cards, and use of State Telephone Systems**

1. The state long-distance telephone network is designed for work-related calls only. No employee may make personal long-distance calls on the state's network except as indicated below.
2. Department issued telephone credit cards are for work-related calls only. No personal long-distance charges may be placed on a Department of Insurance telephone credit card or on any other state or federal paid card or phone.
3. Information on the "local" calling area is found in the telephone book or the online white and yellow pages or the telephone directory issued by a local carrier. Please note that most calls from Raleigh to Durham County or Orange County are **not** local. The state is charged for any calls made from Raleigh to Durham County or Orange County except for a few exchanges in Research Triangle Park; therefore, most of these calls are long-distance and employees may not make personal calls to Durham or Orange County unless you know that the call is a free call. If any call is made and a charge is made to the state, the person must reimburse the state and also may be subject to a personnel action.
4. In accordance with State Budget Policy, an employee who is in overnight travel status for two or more consecutive nights in a week may be compensated for one personal long distance telephone call for each two night's stay. Reimbursement may not exceed \$ 3 for in-state calls and \$ 5 for out-of state calls. The dollar limit is intended to include the total cost of the reimbursement and as such includes the cost of the call and any other charges such as access charges. (Note: An employee shall only be reimbursed up to \$ 3 or \$ 5, depending on where the call originates.)
5. An employee seeking reimbursement for a call should complete a Department travel reimbursement form. The form should show the date and approximate time of the call and the amount for which the employee is seeking reimbursement (attach documentation, such as statement of charges). It is not necessary to make a distinction between the cost of the call and the cost of the access charge.
6. The following is considered an "emergency" phone call under the state's policy and is therefore reimbursable: If an employee's work related travel plans change substantially from what had earlier been conveyed to a spouse or other contact person, then the employee may make a brief telephone call to notify that individual of the change in schedule. Examples of this change might be if an employee will be arriving at a planned destination substantially later than communicated; a state business trip has been extended; or an employee will be staying at a different hotel than originally communicated. Employees should make reasonable efforts to fully inform contact persons of travel schedules prior to travel. These calls should also be reimbursed through the Department travel reimbursement voucher.

7. Another type of “emergency” telephone call which is reimbursable is when the employee is seriously injured or becomes seriously ill while in travel status performing state assigned duties and it is necessary to communicate this information to a spouse or other contact person.
8. Employees who have duty stations which are their homes may call their home office telephone number as a normal work activity to retrieve work related messages. Such telephone calls should normally take no longer than it takes to retrieve work related messages. Such telephone calls are considered to be work-related and may be charged to a state issued credit card.
9. To insure that there is no misunderstanding on this point, any Division which has employees whose duty station is considered to be their home should notify both the employee and the DOI Budget Office in writing that those employees have home offices which are duty stations and that they receive work related phone calls at the home office.
10. Personal calls made or received on a state-owned cell phone are prohibited.
11. Divisions should monitor telephone, cell phone, and calling card statements and expense accounts to ensure compliance with this policy.
12. Employees who abuse this policy are subject to disciplinary action.

#### **Approval of Cell Phones for Employees**

13. State agencies are to minimize the issuance and use mobile electronic communication devices. These items are to be used solely for carrying out the agency mission. Division heads must request in writing, seeking approval of any application for such phones or devices. The division head must submit a request each year to the senior deputy who will either disapprove the request, or forward the request on to the Chief Deputy Commissioner or the Assistant Commissioner where the request will be reviewed and final approval will be made. The requests shall be prepared and submitted annually along with the request for Home Duty Station and on the same form. If the division head has a new employee, or if the employee duties change during the year, requiring additional approval, the division head shall initiate a separate request, and submit it for approval along the same management chain.
  14. The request for issuance and use of each mobile electronic device covered by this policy must include a brief, written justification that explains how the item will be used and how it relates to the mission of the agency or division. All requests shall be maintained by the agency for a period of three years.
  15. Agencies shall conduct periodic audits of mobile device usage to ensure that State employees and contractors are complying with agency policies and State requirements for their use. These audits shall be conducted by either internal auditors, or by other appropriate persons designated by the agency head.
  16. Agencies shall limit the issuance of mobile electronic communication devices to employees for whom access to a mobile electronic device is a critical requirement for job performance such as senior management, investigators, auditors, external review staff and members of the state emergency response team. The device issued and the plan selected shall be the minimum required to support the employees' work requirements. This shall include considering the use of pagers in lieu of a more sophisticated device. The requirement for each mobile electronic device issued shall be documented in a written justification that shall be maintained by the agency and reviewed by the Department annually.
  17. The Agency Budget Office shall retain a separate listing and accounting of the cell phone costs (listing the cost of the equipment and the monthly costs) so that the information can be submitted to the various state government agencies as required by the attached state law.
-

**USE OF MOBILE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS DEVICES**

**SECTION 6A.14.(a)** Every executive branch agency within State government shall develop a policy to limit the issuance and use of mobile electronic devices to the minimum required to carry out the agency's mission. By September 1, 2011, each agency shall provide a copy of its policy to the Chairs of the Appropriations Committee and the Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government of the House of Representatives, the Chairs of the Appropriations/Base Budget Committee and the Appropriations Committee on General Government and Information Technology of the Senate, the Chairs of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Information Technology, the Fiscal Research Division, and the Office of State Budget and Management.

State-issued mobile electronic devices shall be used only for State business. Agencies shall limit the issuance of cell phones, smart phones, and any other mobile electronic devices to employees for whom access to a mobile electronic device is a critical requirement for job performance. The device issued and the plan selected shall be the minimum required to support the employees' work requirements. This shall include considering the use of pagers in lieu of a more sophisticated device. The requirement for each mobile electronic device issued shall be documented in a written justification that shall be maintained by the agency and reviewed annually. All State agency heads, in consultation with the Office of Information Technology Services and the Office of State Budget and Management, shall document and review all authorized cell phone, smart phone, and other mobile electronic communications device procurement, and related phone, data, Internet, and other usage plans for and by their employees. Agencies shall conduct periodic audits of mobile device usage to ensure that State employees and contractors are complying with agency policies and State requirements for their use.

Beginning October 1, 2011, each agency shall report quarterly to the Chairs of the House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations and the House of Representatives Subcommittee on General Government, the Chairs of the Senate Committee on Appropriations and the Senate Appropriations Committee on General Government and Information SL2011-0145 Session Law 2011-145 Page 33

Technology, the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Information Technology, the Fiscal Research Division, and the Office of State Budget and Management on the following:

- (1) Any changes to agency policies on the use of mobile devices.
- (2) The number and types of new devices issued since the last report.
- (3) The total number of mobile devices issued by the agency.
- (4) The total cost of mobile devices issued by the agency.
- (5) The number of each type of mobile device issued, with the total cost for each type.

**SECTION 6A.14.(b)** This section does not apply to the legislative branch or the judicial branch of State government.